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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
----------141357Z 033833 /53
O 141342Z FEB 77 ZFF 4
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5610

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 02720

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GW
SUBJECT: GENSCHER'S VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: BONN 2687

1. I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER AT 8:30 THIS MORNING (FEB. 14) FOR A BRIEFING ON HIS TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST. ALSO PRESENT WERE FONOFF POLITICAL DIRECTOR LAHN AND HEAD OF OFFICE FOR NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS BOEKER, WHO HAD BOTH TRAVELLED WITH GENSCHER. GENSCHER SPOKE WITH ME FOR A HALF HOUR BEFORE LEAVING FOR A MEETING OF THE FDP PRESIDIUM. LAHN AND BOEKER THEREAFTER MADE SOME ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, WHICH WILL BE REPORTED SEPTEL.

2. GENSCHER BEGAN WITH SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS. HE BELIEVES THERE IS A GREATER AGREEMENT AMONG ARAB STATES ON A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT THAN HAS EVER EXISTED BEFORE. ALL THE STATES HE VISITED SEEM TO BE INTERESTED AND ACTIVELY PUSHING FOR SUCH A SETTLEMENT. THIS ALSO APPEARS TO BE TRUE OF SAUDI ARABIA, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT VISIT THERE. SOME ARAB STATES ARE EXPERIENCING GRAVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND, ACCORDING
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TO GENSCHER, THERE IS A STRONG BELIEF THAT SOME REDUCTION OF THE ARMAMENTS BURDEN IS NECESSARY FOR ECONOMIC PROGRESS. THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS FAVORABLE FOR PROGRESS, GENSCHER BELIEVES, AND MOMENTUM TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT MUST BE MAINTAINED.

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3. THERE IS A CLEAR ANTI-SOVIET FEELING AMONG LEADERS HE TALKED WITH, GENSCHER SAID. THE SYRIANS, IN PARTICULAR, HOLD THE SOVIET UNION RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LEBANESE CRISIS AND JUSTIFIED THEIR OWN INTERVENTION THERE AS A REACTION TO SOVIET MOVES. SYRIAN LEADERS SPOKE OF THEIR FEARS THAT A "SECOND ANGOLA" COULD HAVE DEVELOPED IN LEBANON. ARAB LEADERS ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT THE SOVIET UNION WANTS A LASTING PEACE. THE SOVIETS DO NOT WANT WAR EITHER; THEY ONLY WANT TO KEEP THE POT BOILING. GENSCHER TOLD ME HE FULLY AGREED WITH THE ARABS ON THIS POINT. THE ARABS BELIEVE NO CONSTRUCTIVE HELP CAN BE EXPECTED FROM THE SOVIETS, ALTHOUGH THEY CANNOT BE KEPT OUT OF THE DISCUSSION ENTIRELY. GENSCHER SAID SADAT'S "COOLNESS" TOWARD THE SOVIETS WAS NOTICEABLE. AS AN EXAMPLE, GENSCHER NOTED SADAT'S SIMPLE STATEMENT THAT THE SOVIETS "ARE PRESENT AT GENEVA" TO A PRESS CONFERENCE QUESTION ASKING WHETHER THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE INCLUDED IN ANY SETTLEMENT TALKS. GENSCHER FOUND SADAT'S TERSE ANSWER "REMARKABLE" FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PRESS CONFERENCE.

4. GENSCHER SPECIFICALLY WISHED TO UNDERLINE THE FOLLOWING POINTS PRIOR TO SECRETARY VANCE'S TRIP:

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
----------141400Z 033863 /53
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5611

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 02720

EXDIS

A) WE MUST EXERT ALL POSSIBLE PRESSURE TO ASSURE A REALISTIC OUTCOME, INCLUDING SOME FORM OF RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL, FROM THE PALESTINIAN CONGRESS (MARCH 12);
B) GENSCHER WARNED AGAINST GIVING IN TO PRESSURE FOR

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A RAPID CONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. BEFORE WE CAN SEE THE WAY CLEARLY TO A CONSTRUCTIVE GENEVA CONFERENCE, WE MUST KNOW THE RESULTS OF THE PALESTINIAN CONGRESS. ALSO, THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS MUST BE HELD AND A STABLE GOVERNMENT INSTALLED. IN ADDITION, GENSCHER SAID, THE USG MUST BE GIVEN TIME TO EXAMINE THE SITUATION AND TO FORM ITS OWN OPINIONS. HE SAID THERE WAS "GREAT UNDERSTANDING" AMONG ARAB LEADERS FOR THESE CONSIDERATIONS, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT FAHMY SEEMS TO BE PUSHING FOR AT LEAST ONE FORMAL SESSION AT GENEVA IN MARCH IN ORDER TO GIVE AN IMPRESSION OF MOVEMENT. THEREAFTER, A PERIOD OF TWO OR THREE MONTHS COULD ELAPSE BEFORE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WERE UNDERTAKEN. GENSCHER DOUBTED IF THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA BUT SAID THE SECRETARY SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR FAHMY TO SUGGEST IT.

5. THE PALESTINIANS ARE NOT UNITED, GENSCHER SAID, AND THE MATTER IS COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT ALL THE ARAB STATES ARE TRYING TO EXERT INFLUENCE OVER THEM. CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS FROM THE PALESTINIANS
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ARE, THEREFORE, TO BE EXPECTED. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, GENSCHER SAID THE JORDANIANS AND EGYPTIANS SEEM TO AGREE THAT PALESTINIANS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE JORDANIAN DELEGATION. THE SYRIAN VIEW WAS LESS WELL-DEFINED, ALTHOUGH THEY APPARENTLY WERE NOT FIRMLY OPPOSED TO THIS IDEA. EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY SAID HE WAS AGAINST PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN AN "ALL ARAB" DELEGATION AT GENEVA BECAUSE ARAFAT MIGHT TRY TO WREST CONTROL OF THE DELEGATION AND THAT, IN ANY CASE, PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION WOULD LIMIT THEIR OWN FREEDOM OF ACTION. BOEKER LATER NOTED WHAT MAY STILL BE DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE JORDANIANS ON THIS ISSUE. CROWN PRINCE HASSAN, ACCORDING TO BOEKER, SAID JORDAN WAS STILL IN FAVOR OF AN "ALL ARAB" DELEGATION, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD NOT INSIST ON IT.

6. BASED ON HIS EXPERIENCE IN EGYPT, GENSCHER BELIEVES FAHMY'S INFLUENCE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS REMAINS VERY STRONG AND THAT HE IS STILL AN ACTIVIST. VICE PRESIDENT MUBARAK SEEMS TO BE PLAYING A MORE ACTIVE ROLE -- HE SAT IN ON GENSCHER'S DISCUSSION WITH SADAT. GENSCHER OBSERVED THAT BOTH MUBARAK AND THE PRIME MINISTER SEEM TO HAVE IMPROVED THEIR POSITION IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE RIOTS.

7. THE SUBJECT OF EUROPEAN PARTICIPATION IN THE

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GENEVA CONFERENCE CAME UP SEVERAL TIMES DURING HIS
TRIP, BUT GENSCHER SAID THAT EACH TIME IT DID HE
CHARACTERIZED THE EUROPEAN ROLE AS SUPPORTIVE OF
U.S. EFFORTS AND TOLD LISTENERS THAT EUROPE
WAS NOT INTERESTED IN RAISING THE NUMBER OF CONFERENCE
PARTICIPANTS. GENSCHER OBSERVED THAT THE EGYPTIANS
WERE MORE CRITICAL THAN THE SYRIANS OF THE NON-
PUBLICATION OF THE EC DECLARATION ON THE MIDDLE EAST,
PERHAPS, HE OPINED, BECAUSE THEY WERE BETTER
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5612

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 BONN 02720

EXDIS

THE DECLARATION. GENSCHER JUSTIFIED THE EC'S LACK OF
ACTION TO THE ARABS AS A SIGN OF THE EC'S OVERRIDING
DESIRE FOR CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE U.S., WHICH WAS
IN THE INTEREST OF MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES AS WELL.

8. GENSCHER MENTIONED THAT WALDHEIM WOULD BE REPORTING
TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON HIS OWN ME TOUR. HE
BELIEVES THE SECURITY COUNCIL SHOULD MERELY NOTE THE
REPORT AND NOT GET INTO A SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION
OF THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, WHICH WOULD BE PREMATURE.

9. GENSCHER SAID HE WOULD BE INFORMING THE ISRAELI

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EMBASSY HERE ABOUT HIS TRIP. HE IS EXPECTING TO VISIT ISRAEL HIMSELF MARCH 16-17.

10. THE FOREIGN MINISTER TOLD ME THAT, EVERYWHERE HE WENT, THE PENDING VISIT OF SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE WAS BEING LOOKED FORWARD TO WITH GREAT EXPECTATION. HE SENDS HIS WARM REGARDS TO THE SECRETARY AND WISHES HIM EVERY SUCCESS. GENSCHER CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD STAY IN CLOSE TOUCH ON DEVELOPMENTS, IN PARTICULAR, HE WILL BE INTERESTED IN LEARNING THE RESULTS OF THE SECRETARY'S TRIP.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Event:
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